

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07  
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05 CEA-01 EA-10 FRB-03  
NEA-10 USIA-06 OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 AGRE-00  
OMB-01 SS-15 PA-01 PRS-01 /104 W  
-----110783 232129Z /70

R 232058Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3216  
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
USMISSION USNATO  
USMISSION GENEVA

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USEEC AND USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSIES

E.O. 11652 N.A.  
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SP  
SUBJECT: LABOR PLANT ELECTIONS: THE FIRST WEEK

REF: MADRID 149  
1. SUMMARY. A LACK OF RELIABLE ELECTION RESULTS HAS LED  
TO CONFUSING AND CONTRADICTORY INFORMATION AS THE FIRST  
WEEK OF THE SCHEDULED THREE-WEEK PLANT ELECTION PERIOD  
ENDED. ALTHOUGH POLITICAL INTEREST IS RUNNING HIGH,  
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THE GOVT HAS PERSISTED IN DOWNPLAYING THE ELECTIONS.  
ONE NEWS AGENCY SHOWS THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED SWC LEADING  
THE SOCIALIST UGT TWO TO ONE, BUT THE LATTER UNION  
HAS WON IMPORTANT ELECTIONS IN SOME OF SPAIN'S LARGEST  
PLANTS. A PLEASANT SURPRISE HAS BEEN THE EXCELLENT  
SHOWING OF THE BASQUE STV IN THE FOUR BASQUE PROVINCES.  
SOME OF THE SMALL SO-CALLED "INDEPENDENT" CENTER-ORIENTED

UNIONS ARE MAKING THEIR PRESENCE FELT IN A MINOR WAY. IT IS STILL DOUBTFUL THAT THESE "PARTIAL" ELECTIONS WILL SETTLE THE POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE UGT AND THE SWC. WHILE THE UGT MAY IN FACT "WIN" IN THE BIG PLANTS, THEY HAVE AN UPHILL BATTLE TO WIN OVERALL. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH SOME INTERESTING TRENDS HAVE BECOME APPARENT AFTER THE FIRST WEEK OF THE SCHEDULED THREE-WEEK PLANT ELECTION PERIOD, THERE IS A LACK OF RELIABLE ELECTION RESULTS - A SITUATION FOR WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MUST TAKE A GOOD PART OF THE BLAME. WHILE INTEREST IN THESE FIRST FREE LABOR ELECTIONS IN 40 YEARS IS GENERALLY RUNNING HIGH AND THE PRESS IS GIVING THEM CONSIDERABLE SPACE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS PERSISTED IN DOWNPLAYING THEM. ONLY AFTER THE NATION'S TOP LABOR REPORTERS ON JANUARY 20 PUBLICLY TOOK THE MINISTER OF LABOR TO TASK FOR NOT COMPILING AND MAKING AVAILABLE THE RESULTS ON A NATIONAL SCALE (AND FOR "TRYING TO AVOID THEIR POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS"), DID THE LABOR MINISTRY BELATEDLY PROMISE "TO FACILITATE INFORMATION ON THE LABOR ELECTIONS". THIS WILL PROBABLY BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE MINISTRY'S 52 PROVINCIAL LABOR DELEGATES, WHO ARE CHARGED WITH RECEIVING ELECTION RESULTS FROM THE PARTICIPATING PLANTS IN THEIR PROVINCES. IN THE MEANTIME, OVERALL ELECTION FIGURES HAVE BEEN HIGHLY CONFUSING, WITH THE SOCIALIST UGT AND THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS' COMMISSIONS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(SWC) BOTH CLAIMING TO BE IN FIRST PLACE AFTER THE INITIAL POLLING. OVER THE WEEKEND, THE CIFRA NEWS AGENCY ISSUED THE FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY RANK-ORDER STANDING (FAR FROM AUTHORITATIVE) BASED ON ITS SOURCES: SWC 41 PERCENT, UGT 21 PERCENT, INDEPENDENTS 11 PERCENT, BASQUE STV 9 PERCENT, INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST USO (ANTI-MERGER FACTION) 7 PERCENT, MAOIST SU 5 PERCENT, AND MARXIST-LENINIST CSUT 1 PERCENT (THE ANARCHO-SYNDICAL CNT IS BOYCOTTING THE ELECTIONS). AMCONSUL SEVILLA REPORTS THAT AS OF JANUARY 23, PRELIMINARY RESULTS HAVE THE SWC LEADING THE UGT BY A 2 TO 1 MARGIN.

3. IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT THE UGT HAS BEEN DOING BETTER IN THE LARGER PLANTS (WHERE THE "CLOSED LIST" OR UNION LIST SYSTEM PREVAILS). THUS, THE UGT DEFEATED THE SWC IN THE LATTER'S COAL-MINING STRONGHOLD OF HUNDOSA (25,000 WORKERS), AND ALSO WON AT U.S. STEEL'S ALTOS HORNOS PLANT NEAR BILBAO. AS A MATTER OF FACT, LOOKING AT THE BIG PLANTS IN THE BASQUE AREA, THE UGT IS IN FIRST PLACE WITH 26 PERCENT, FOLLOWED BY STV (25 PERCENT) AND SWC (17 PERCENT). WE SHALL BE PAYING CLOSE ATTENTION TO OTHER LARGE PLANT ELECTIONS AS THEY COME UP.

4. VERY BRIEFLY, THE UGT AND THE SWC HAVE BEEN STRESSING THE FOLLOWING CAMPAIGN LINES. THE UGT HAS BEEN ADVERTISING ITSELF AS THE SOCIALIST TRADE UNION OF SPAIN, ENJOYING "FRATERNAL RELATIONS" WITH THE PSOE. IT OBVIOUSLY HOPES THAT SOME OF THE PSOE'S ELECTORAL MAGIC WILL RUB OFF ON THE UGT, AND TO THAT END PSOE SECGEN FELIPE GONZALEZ IS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN ("THE SUCCESS OF THE PSOE IS TIED TO THAT OF THE UGT IN THESE ELECTIONS," GONZALEZ HAS DECLARED). THE UGT IS ALSO GOING ALL OUT TO PIN THE "COMMUNIST UNION" LABEL ON THE SWC. IN RESPONSE, THE SWC IS PUSHING ITS "EXPERIENCE, EFFICIENCY, AND RESPONSIBILITY", ITS "YEARS OF OPPOSITION TO DICTATORSHIP), AND ITS ROLE AS A UNIFYING AGENT OF ALL THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WORKING CLASS. PCE LEADER SANTIAGO CARRILLO, IN A JANUARY 21 INTERVIEW, WHILE ADMITTING THAT THE COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN SWC WAS "REAL", STRESSED THAT MANY NON-COMMUNIST WORKERS ALSO BELONGED TO THE UNION. HE REPEATED THE THEME THAT THERE SHOULD BE "ONE SOLE LABOR ORGANIZATION" FOR ALL WORKERS.

5. ONE OF THE PLEASANT SURPRISES HAS BEEN THE EXCELLENT SHOWING OF THE STV IN THE BASQUE AREA. MANY OBSERVERS  
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HAD INITIALLY DOUBTED THAT THE SMALL, BASICALLY NON-POLITICAL, BREAD-AND-BUTTER BASQUE UNION COULD COMPETE WITH THE BIG BOYS. EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION AND HARD WORK HAVE OBVIOUSLY PAID OFF, HOWEVER, FOR AMCONSUL BILBAO REPORTS THAT INITIAL ESTIMATES SHOW THE STV CURRENTLY LEADING IN THE BASQUE REGION WITH 28 PERCENT OF THE ELECTED PLANT DELEGATES, FOLLOWED BY SWC WITH 22 PERCENT, AND UGT WITH 20 PERCENT. WHILE THE STV MAY ULTIMATELY NOT BE ABLE TO HANG ON TO ITS EARLY LEAD IN THE FOUR BASQUE PROVINCES, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT IT HAS ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A PRIME LABOR FORCE IN THAT REGION.

6. SEVERAL OTHER EVENTS MAY BE INDICATORS OF FUTURE TRENDS. THE SMALL SO-CALLED "INDEPENDENT" AND CENTER-ORIENTED TRADE UNIONS (WHICH THE LEFT DESCRIBES AS "YELLOW") HAVE BEEN RUNNING CANDIDATES IN SCATTERED PLANTS AND HAVE MADE THEIR PRESENCE FELT. ON JANUARY 17, TWO OF THESE - THE CGT AND THE CTC - FORMED AN ELECTORAL ALLIANCE WHICH MAY PAY DIVIDENDS. THE LARGEST OF THE "INDEPENDENT" GROUP, THE CDT, PULLED OFF A SURPRISING VICTORY AT THE CITROEN PLANT IN VIGO (WITH 8,000 PLUS WORKERS, THE LARGEST PLANT IN GALICIA) AS IT OUT-POLLED THE UGT IN A CLOSE RACE, WITH SWC IN THIRD PLACE.

7. COMMENT. THE GOVERNMENT IS BEING FORCED TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE TRADE UNIONS' PLANT ELECTIONS ARE PROVOKING CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL INTEREST. AND YET IT IS STILL DOUBTFUL THAT THESE ELECTIONS WILL SETTLE THE POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE UGT AND THE SWC. BY GOVT DECREE THE ELECTIONS ARE "PARTIAL" IN NATURE, AND THERE ARE AS YET NO STATISTICS TO SHOW WHAT PERCENTAGE

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OF THE 6 MILLION ELIGIBLE VOTERS WILL IN FACT BE PARTICIPATING (SOME 2 MILLION WORKERS IN ESTABLISHMENTS OF UNDER 6 EMPLOYEES ARE INELIGIBLE). AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ARE ALSO EXCLUDED, WHICH MEANS THAT IN PROVINCES SUCH AS CASTELLON IN THE LEVANTE, ALMOST ONE HALF OF THE WORKERS WILL NOT BE PARTICIPATING.

8. IN A SPECIAL ADVANCE EDITION JANUARY 23, LEFT CENTER WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE CAMBIO 16 FEATURES UGT SECGEN NICOLAS REDONDO ON THE COVER GIVING THE V FOR VICTORY SIGN AND DECLARING "WE SHALL WIN". THE UGT MAY IN FACT "WIN" IN THE ADMITTEDLY IMPORTANT "BIG PLANTS", BUT IT LOOKS LIKE AN UPHILL BATTLE IF THEY ARE TO WIN OVERALL. THE PSOE HAS TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT THE UGT WILL BE HAPPY TO BREAK EVEN WITH THE SWC. ATTENTION WILL NOW BE FOCUSSED ON THE ALL-IMPORTANT WEEK-LONG MADRID AND CATALUNYA ELECTIONS, STARTING JAN. 23 AND JAN. 30 RESPECTIVELY. STABLER

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## Message Attributes

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